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Review: Evolution of Civilization

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Aug., 1909), pp. 202-203

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1777832>

Accessed: 24-06-2016 23:07 UTC

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Judging from the author's barometric observations and description of his route, the country between Pasto and the Caquetá and Putumayo presents formidable difficulties to the construction and maintenance of a cart road.

Señor Triana has the rare gift of making the reader of his book travel with him. From every rock, stream, shrub, tree, hill, and mountain he evolves an atmosphere to which he gives eloquent expression, and although in general his pages seem to lack hard facts, the reader feels that he has been taken through the country and has learned everything regarding its salient features, its resources, and its varied types of inhabitants, and that he has been the companion of a keen observer, a philosopher, and a many-sided man.

G. E. CHURCH.

#### THE PANAMA CANAL.

'The Panama Canal and its Makers.' By Vaughan Cornish. London: Fisher Unwin. 1909. Pp. 192. *Map and Illustrations.* 5s.

This volume is an outcome of Dr. Cornish's independent tour of inspection over the Panama canal works, and is no less interesting a study than would be expected from him. He deals with the history of the enterprise, with the present works, at special length with that important section the Culebra cut, with the conditions of labour and health on the isthmus, with the effect of the opening of the canal on maritime communications and trade, and with that somewhat problematical question, the cost of the work. The map prepared for this *Journal* finds a place in the book, and there are numerous photographs, not always quite successful; but engineering works in progress are a difficult subject for the camera.

#### GENERAL.

##### EVOLUTION OF CIVILIZATION.

'The Rise of Man.' By Colonel C. R. Conder, LL.D. London: Murray. 1908. viii. + 368 pp. 12s. net.

The main object of this work is indicated, not by the title, but by the familiar lines quoted from *In Memoriam* on the title-page about the "one far off divine event to which the whole creation moves." Colonel Conder is favourably known as a distinguished archæologist, for many years conductor of the Survey of Palestine. But, although there are some commendable features in the present work, the hand of the amateur is too frequently betrayed in its general treatment, not only of the early, but even of the later (historic) periods. What, for instance, will anthropologists say to the statements that "skulls of prehistoric man are as yet only known in the west of Europe, and *all these belong to the Neolithic age,*" and that of his palæolithic predecessors "we have no information at all, since *not a single skull or bone has been found?*" (italics mine).

Then the long-exploded Finno-Basque relations are revived, and we are told that the Basque tongue is "nearest akin to the Finnish," with which it has really no connection. The suggestion that "blubber lips among negroes and Mongols may have developed from exclusive (*sic*) eating of flesh" may pass as an anatomical curiosity; but a strong protest must be entered against the assumption that the New World was discovered by the Chinese "a thousand years before the advent of Columbus." Here the reference obviously is to the early Buddhist migration to the shadowy land of Fusang, which was wrongly supposed to be some part of America, and on which were based many wild theories regarding Asiatic influences on American civilized peoples. Thus our author first states that the Hindus "through Japan and the south left their mark in later times in both Mexico and Peru," and then says that the Incas "introduced Mongol civilization and the

Indian calendar," and elsewhere takes seriously Ranking's suggestion that "Manco-Capac, the first Inca, was a son of the Mongol emperor Kublai Khan." It is further supposed that the source of these cultures may not after all have been the Hindus, the Mongols, or the Chinese Buddhists, but the Malays, who may have made their way from the Malay peninsula across the Pacific ocean to Easter island. It may be pointed out that the Peruvian and Aztec cultures could not possibly have been derived from half a dozen different Asiatic peoples, the less so since they are themselves independent developments, differing profoundly one from the other.

Coming to the historic section, the reader is startled by finding Edward III. amongst the Crusaders, making peace at Acre in 1272, and a treaty with Venice in 1325, while Edward II. was still reigning. Then Columbus, born in 1445, interviews Boccaccio, who died in 1375. What "the declining days of the early (*sic*) seventeenth century" may mean is not clear, but to this period Cervantes (*ob.* 1616), Velasquez (*ob.* 1660), and Murillo (*ob.* 1682), are all alike referred. Roman history fares no better, the Cimbri being described as reaching Gaul in 500 B.C., centuries before either Gaul or the Cimbri were known to the Romans. Nevertheless, both the Roman and Greek sections are, on the whole, very well treated.

A. H. K.

DR. REICH'S HANDBOOK OF GEOGRAPHY.

'Handbook of Geography: Descriptive and Mathematical.' By Emil Reich. 2 vols. London: Duckworth & Son. 1908. Price (vol. 1) 7s. 6d. net; (vol 2) 5s. net.

Dr. Reich declares himself to be a firm believer in the "immense importance of geographical factors both on past history and on present life." "Geopolitics . . . is one of the most decisive elements in human institutions." After this introduction, we turn to his pages with interest, to examine his treatment of geography, and more particularly of geopolitics. We find one volume devoted to geographical physiognomies, and one to mathematical geography. These, the author informs us, have been compiled from the best geographical authorities, in twelve different languages, modified by the author's own personal observations.

Frankly, the results are very disappointing. In spite of a number of deviations from standard English, Dr. Reich handles our language remarkably well. It is in the selection and arrangement of the matter that he fails. Not only does he not bring out the immense importance of the geographical factor on the past or present, nor give us any outlines of the subject of geo-politics, but much of what he does write is found to be very loose and misleading. In the sixteen pages devoted to the British Isles there are either actual misstatements or statements which might have been expressed better on fourteen of them. For instance, we find, "If English temperature is happy in its equality, it has to pay for these advantages by an almost constant belt of fogs and mists." "A line drawn along the Downs marks the watershed of the southern streams." "Kinsale, which was not only founded by Spaniards, but from 1381 to 1601 was actually a possession of Spain." "Ireland has no peaks at all comparable in altitude with those of Scotland and Wales. . . ."

If we turn to South Africa, we again find such inexactitudes as, "The Tugela, which forms the northern boundary of Natal." "The lower terrace includes the actual Cape Colony . . . lying up to 300 metres (about 1000 feet) above sea-level." "From the Indian ocean blows the monsoon or south wind." "The entire trade of the colony goes through Cape Town." "Of the Crown Colony, Vryburg is the chief town, occupied by Europeans."

Perhaps the following is an example of Dr. Reich's geo-politics. If so, it is sufficient to damage a much better book than this one: "Bristol appears to enjoy an ideal position as a great seaport, but its harbour is nevertheless decadent.

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